







K Murchet (G)

639 d. 52.



THE COMPLAINT

OF A CHRISTIAN SOVLE.

Containing certaine remedies and comforts

against the trouble and conflict of Conscience.

Newlie written in meten



PRINTED AT EDINBURGH BY RO.

bert Charters, Printer to the Kings most

Excellent Majestie. M.D.C.X.



TO THE MOST NOBLE AND HIS
 singulare good Lord Iohn Earle of MONTROSE
 Lord Grahame, one of his Majesties privie Coun-
 sell, we wishe long life with increesse of
 honour in the seare of the Lord,



Althogh, most Noble Lord, I (as one ever mind-
 full of your L. honorable place, and of that
 dewtie we all ought therevnto) did not lacke a
 will to haue saluted your L. with some fruites
 of my trauelles this long time ago: but finding
 in my selfe that great want of graces which
 my Muse should haue granted, and not being
 bound to haue presented my selfe emptie into
 your presence, as also feareing if I had offered anie thing that my barba-
 rity and incongruous speech should rather haue moued your L. to mis-
 like me for my homelines; then otherwise to haue receiued me in fauour
 for the same. Yet being long tosted betwixt two extremities, some-
 times calling to minde the dewty I was bound to, and sometimes re-
 membering how I was alwaies vnable (because of my manifold defects)
 to haue satisfied the least point of your worthie desire, haue in end thogh
 better to be rude then vngrate, and so much the more because of the ex-
 cellency of the theam proposd vnto me, I must with your fauour (althogh
 not with such learning as you merite, nor with such holines as the ma-
 ter requyres) take the boldnes as to acquaint your L. with my small
 beginning, and to specke a little of this subiect concerning a troubled
 soule, and of the comforts against the conflict of conscience, as a thing
 prescribed vnto me for the tyme, being in the same agonie my selfe
 (for my owne priuate content, and to auido the tediousnes of ill im-
 ployed tyme) I was perswaded by some who had a great interest to the
 disposition of my will, to publish this little scrole to the world, that others
 might reape some profite thereby, and be fortified against the feare and
 apprehension of the gilt of sinne, and certainly the worthines of the sub-
 iect moued me to yeeld the more easily to their desires. Yet knowing
 that students in their beginning (how worthe so ever) haue but a cold
 welcome

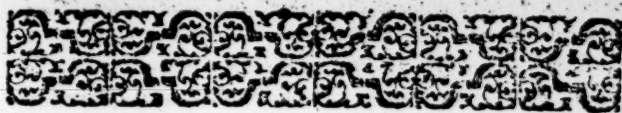
welcome in a forren land without the support, and countenance of some great & worthie personage, as also fearing my imperfections in handling this subject, might happily blemish the excellency of the worke, and giue some distaste to the curious reader. I haue therefore in my boldnes directed it to your L. as a patron, hoping ye will rather be a preses to defend my weaknes, then to cavell or oppon against such tender propositions. For since all that I haue done, rather proceedes of lone and bounden dewty, then any fantasticall toy or desire of renown: I must therefore commit all my slips and ignorances to your L. subsidie, looking rather to be acceptable for my good will, then to be loathed for that quibk is imlaiking in me, and thought vsauorie for that quibk in due affection is done. So I haue presumed to shew both my selfe and my labours vnder your L. protection, beseeching you receaue these strangers (as you vsually do all men) with a gracious and a gentle eie, and to accept of my poore endeuours, as a testimonie and a pledge of my humble dewty and service: that by your L. honourable acceptance and exemple, others may be drawne to entertaine them kindly, and bid them the better welcome: so shall your L. incourage me to some stronger attempt, and bind me to continue alwaies, promising certenly if my muse shall afford any better things there after, neither shall your person nor your place be forget, but as my talent increases your L. shall know.

MY greatest reverence is not halfe my dew,
For more nor all my worth thy worth requyres
By my attempt I wishe there might ensue
But some contentment to thy hie desires:

And as before the Sun no darknes bides,
Thy Sunnie eies my imperfections hides.

Virtue quihlk dwels into the inward thoght,
Makes good the seed what euer be the smell:
The outward glosse some time doth seeme but nought,
Quhill as the inward stuffe doeth much excell:
Gold thogh not finde some men do well esteeme,
I rather loue to be then so to seeme.

Your Lordships humble oratour in Christ
At. George Muschet,



THE PREFACE.



It is a great happines to flee al vicious ex-
streams, and to hold a commendable medi-
ocritie: so it is a miserie quhilk we cannot
sufficiently lament, to see (in this latter daies
amongst men quhilk make profession to
beleue in a better life) some who haue so
sold them selfe to the loue of this world that they seeke not
for an vther, and some who are so violently caried away
with the feare and apprehension of Death, so that vpon a-
ny shew of alteration in their health there is nothing to be
heard bot strange sighs and groanes, the witnessles of abject
thoghts, and the vnworthie contesting of a soule that wolde
dispute with God. The remedies against so great mis-
chiques are very necessary: and I hope this treatise follow-
ing will furnish some-what for the purpose (gathered not
in the bogs and mures of humane wisdom, but in the garden
of life) quhilk is the Scriptures of the Prophets and Apo-
stles of the ever-living God: The savory iuce of the quhilk
remedies digested in our soules, will make vs neither be too
much reioisd with the pleasures of this world, neither too
much feard to passe out of this world, but that with a holy
care, a vigilant feare, and a filiall reverence, we shall haue
the eies of our soules and eares of our heartes open to the
voice of the Lord, crying to all mankind, *Soumes of men re-
turne*, yea it wolde cure vs of that lethargie, palsie, and spi-
rituall apoplexie, where-with so many poore soules are
daily infected, quhilk never thinking of death are dead li-
ving, or rather are as the dead quhilk bury the dead, no-
knowe

The Preface.

Knowing what the kingdome of God is, neither hauing any care to be of it, or to procure or advance it. This iuice will free vs from that feare quhilk congeils our spirits, and from that frencie quhilk makes vs doubt of our saife delivery, and from that spirituall melancholy quhilk subverts all true judgement in vs, and thrusts vs (as it were) in a brutish childishnes, estranging vs from these things quhilk should cause most joy and consolation in vs. This present collection is the box containing the precious oyle the quhilk being carefully digested by you will (I hope) produce some profitable effect, Bot to giue you some greater tast of the samyn, and to shew the summe of this little scrole. In thir few & vnadvised lynes, there is breefflie (or as it wer) in a certaine a bridgmenet set down two things, the one is the vehement calamitie quhilk proceedes not from a sleeping soule, but from the feeling disease and excessiue trouble of a wakned conscience, not onely accused but convicted of her persewers, and brought to the strait, farther nor the scaffold, euen almost to the doore of the graue, by the remembrance of sin. In the other part there is adjoind, although not separately by it selfe but mixtly throughe the whole, some speciall remedies for the most diseased soule, and some medicins equivalent for the farrest dijected conscience, and some salues very necessarie for that spirituall palse, quhilk if it be rightly applyed, will not onely banish all present feare of death, but euen that quhilk no other Phisick can afford, it will furnishe perpetuall health to the soule, and leaue the minde so at ease, that no inconvenient (how great so ever) shall be able heereafter to ty the man to the bed. This is the summe Christian Reader, and albeit it be not so ripely digested, nor vttered with such grace, as he ought to haue who lets any thing go from him to the censure of this age: yet impudencie hes so prevailede with me for the time, and a care to do good with my small talent, did so continually push
my

The Preface.

my lukes muse that I could finde no rest in silence. But as Michall did laugh when David did dance, so I know some Michals will scorne at my singing; and yet I hope otherwaies to be welcomed of some, for if any good Davids be in this land there I shall be harbored, because this is a song whereat Davids should be delyted. So not caring for Michals taunting, nor Rabschekas railings, nor Ischmaels scofs, because it is not with such I crave to be mirrie, neither with them to communicate our spirituall melodie, to the well effected Christian (who giues lodging to the Hebrew Harpes, and who intertaines the musically instruments of Sion) I direct this Ballad, to be set vpon their strings, to be played in their Palaces, and to be sung in their Innes, knowing this one that if the pleasantnes do not delite you, the long somnes shall not wearie you. And if all be not so, well ordered, as you merite (worthie Reader) nor so Poeticallie composed as the writer wolde wishe, let my want be countervailed by my good will, and when better things shall be offered, you shall not lacke.

Fair well.



THE COMPLAINT

OF A CHRISTIAN SOVLE.



Oulde God I had such accessse to
thy face,

As of before when I thy favour
fander:

Would God my soule were so in-
dewed with grace,

That I might liue as thy worde
doth command,

Then should my life for ever preach thy praise,
My lippes should found thy mercies manifold:
Much should I scorne for to be one of these,
Whom Sathan, sin, death, hell or worldlings wold.

But ah, my wittes can not so far aspyre,
My senslesse heart is ever hardened so:
That while thy spirit in me should haue impyre,
Sin raignes to death, that all my weils doe go.

Thus ere I liue, I rather chuse to die,
'And die I dare not for my great trespasse:
Except in death thy sonne should picke me,
And wash my soule while it be cleane as glasse,

B

Rom. 6.

Psal. 51

The Complaint of

Sinnes great deceate vnto the world is knowne
By olde experience and by practise late:
And I poore wretch am daylie overthrowne,
And spoilde by sinnes which conscience doth repeate.

Her glittering shades and her allurements strange,
Moude me to yeelde, and did me captiue take:
And therefore iustlie may the Lord reuenge,
To my great greefe and euerlasting wracke.

My great offences if I should expresse,
I know large scrolles could not the same contene:
And neither are my priue salts the lesse,
But much more frequent in my life hes bene.

My false affection and my corrupt will
Hath sold my soule to everie sort of sinne:
And this fraile flesh conspyring ay my ill
Lettes suithing fancies all my freedom win.

Thus can I never to the heavens approch,
So much infect with everie blemish thing:
No, no, I haue not boldnes in so much,
Once to beholde thy countenance bening.

For oh, the vylenes of my great trespass
Wrappes me in chaines of darke eternall cair:
And I forgot how sweete thy presence was,
My lights are darke, my eyes sees life na mair.

And so it skilles not what my sinnes haue beene,
I cease t'abridge, much more to finde them out:
For if my lesser faultines were scene,
I should be odious all the world throughout.

Therefore

Therefore with David I mon rather wisfe
My finnes were covered and my slippes forget;
That my perversnes and my deeds amisse
Quench not the courage that should mercie get.

Psal. 32.

For if thy goodnes doe deny releefe,
Falne are my hopes like widdring leases to grounds
None can expresse the agonie and greefe,
Which in my conscience daylie does abound.

For oh, my finnes vnto the heavens are gone
My soule to banish from that pleasant place,
Yea, that quihiks more my life is almost done,
And wrake by that perturber of my peace.

Thogh this be much it is not all my we,
But heere the greefs quihik doe me most annoy,
That I remember how my God was so,
My light, my loue, my life, my hope, my joy.

And to haue sind against so fair a face,
O it wolde crushe a world of soules in care,
And I who liud in sin so long a space,
Except thou help must die into dispare.

But thogh my lukles life hes ay bene such,
As did transgres the limits of thy law,
Yet my offences are not halfe so much,
But to thy servant thou may mercy shew.

For nons cast off but such as haits thy Name,
And none do perish but who dies perverse,
None dies to torment but who liues in shame,
Bad life brings death, and does all joys disperse.

The Complaint of

Such am I not, with all my strength I loue thee,
And my perversnes I sincerely hate:
I loath my sinfull life, and longs to prooue thee
Sweete, kinde and gracious to my poore estate,

My sinnes are great, but heere my comforts haill,
Thou knowst that which I would not, that I do:
And yet not I, but my corruptions faill,
And thus I am sinfull all the worlde vnto.

But oh, my spirit doth sorrow for my sin,
Although my fragile flesh be frightened so:
My soule doth long to see the dayes begin,
That my affection from the world should go;

Jude

My former walking I abhorre so much,
The coat thats spotted with the flesh I hate:
Yea I disdaine the members made me such,
And loathes my selfe that I was so ingrate.

But though I doe bewaile my sinnes eachone,
And all my crooked wayes with teares lament:
And though I smart for that great evill thats done,
While I sincerely for my sinnes repent,

Yet am I ever troubled and dismaide,
Because my God hath hid his gracious face:
Sathan rejoices that I am affraide,
And willes me never looke for anie grace.

Thus am I humbled, but too much cast downe;
And sees my sinnes, but in a fearefull glasse:
This sight willes me to th'vncouth land be bowne,
And such strong charge doth all my strength surpasse.

Doth

Doth thus my God conspire my woe and wrack?
Or did he not a gracious sauiour send?
Or doth he onelie life from me abstract?
Or shall I yet haue happines in end?

Thy strength is not diminished, I know,
Thy arme not shortened to thine owne elect:
They taste of Sions fontaine sweete Siloa,
And drinks the brock which from the river breack.

Isai. 8.

Thou giues the food which fro the heuēs doth raine *Reue. 22.*
Thou'le quench their thirst even wth the water of life:
Once let me drinke, that I thirst not againe,
And finish quicklie all my woe and strife.

For thou delights not in a sinners death,
And hast no pleasure wounded soules to kill:
No, thou canst not reioice to stop the breath,
Thogh we be frighted with a world of ill.

The dame would not so gladlie keepe her yong,
For all the flightring of her feathers faire:
The mothers hand is not so softlie hung,
To saue her childe of whom she hes great caire.

As thou hast thine out-stretched armes abroad
For their deliverie who regards thy name:
No, thou art theirs, and they are thine, o God,
And so, thogh lost, yet thou canst bring them hame.

Then this that I doe ever so bewaile,
Is not because with thee their is no grace:
No, no, it's rather that I am so fraile,
And hes not eyes to see thy gracious face,

The Complaint of

For what great comfort can thy grace afford?
Or what a joy is it thy mercie brings?
Or what a pleasure is thy glorie, Lord?
If thou with-hold from me these precious things.

No, it doth serue but to aggrede my paine,
To see such plentie and so small to teast:
I rather wish my lights were darke againe,
Or by such sight my life were so oppress.

But let my faith go apprehend thy loue,
And make my hope assured of thy joyes:
And let my thirstie soule these mercies proue,
He loath the worlde and all her foolish toys.

Then shall I not vnto my fancie liue,
Nor worldlings best contentments longer loue:
Th'earths fading glorie I should not atchieue,
But eyer long eternitie to prooue.

After 3. Hamans preferment I should not respect,
Luk, 16. All Dives riches should not once content me:
I Alexanders kingdomes should reject,
And not reioice thogh all the world were lent me.

But all my thoughts outthroggh the clouds shold reik
My words aboue the highest mountaines roare:
And my delights should be of heaven to speik,
My joy to thinke on that eternall glore,

But since my faith is ever weakened so,
And all my hopes are shadowed with care:
And since thy quickning sprite departs me fro,
That living I among the graues repaire,

How

a Christian soule.

How can my thoughts or words to heaven ascende
How can my deing sprites exalt on hie?
How can my courage in such woe be kend,
While it is loadned in perplexitie?

My life is death if so I liue alasfe,
My courage faintnes, all my pleasure paine:
My rest is tedious, all my health distresse,
Except some comfort from the heaven doe raine.

I know thy goodnes may asswadge my strife,
Thogh I encounter with these perrelles all:
Thy sacred Booke shoves thou maiest saue my life,
And keepe it harmeles both from death and hell.

For Israell scapt from that Egyptian host,
Andeke against proud Pharaos prevailede:
That horses, chariots, Capitaines he lost,
The rotten reede of Egypt so him failde.

Exod 14

That strong Assyrian armie was defeate
By heavenlie powers of their liues bereft:
And Sions Cittie saued from perelles great,
And Ashur slaughtered when the seege he left.

2. Kin. 19

Young David with the Philistim did fight
By that great strength of God and not of man:
Saules best coat-armour could not fit him right,
By other forces he the battell wan.

1 Sam. 17

My Pharo, Ashur and Goliath strong
Shall take the foile, if yet thy strength thou grant me:
And I triumph thy holie Courts among,
And be victorious when the world shall want me.

The Complaint of

My paines may cease, my trouble shall depart;
And all my inward griefes shall haue an end
And I haue solace yet for all my smart,
If thou shalt mercie to thy servant send.

No foraine forces, no domestick fo,
Shall once astonish or amaze my minde:
Except my haynous treacherie doe go,
And make my Saviour to my soule vnkinde.

Gen. 19. I know my sinnes may make me lose thy loue,
Loyttring in Sodome may procure thy hate:
Or to looke backe when from the world I moue,
May serue to metamorphose my estate,

Num. 11. Or to loath Manna and that heavenlie fude,
And long for Egypts fatnes in the plaine:
May make the fire serpents be too rude,
And sting to death, that we liue not againe.

Jonas 1. Or to repyne against thy holie will,
And go to Tharsis that should Nineue teach:
May tost the fillie ship with stormes so shill,
And cast poore Ionah in a fearefull ditch.

In Sodome, Egypt, Tharsis, noight but woe,
Although their dainties doe a while delight thee:
Their pleasures perish, all their games do go,
And sorrowing sadnes shall in end requite thee.

No, noight in earth but crost delights is scene,
And all her sweetnes mixt with bitter gall:
For where to day triumph and ball hes beene,
To morrow mourning oftentimes befall,

What

What shall I then such bad contentments loue?
Which nought but momentaneall comfort brings:
No, no, my soule delights to be aboue,
To see the valour of eternall things,

Where there is endles happines of life,
And perfect pleasure for the Saints prepaide:
Glorie but shame and rest withoutten strife,
As the holie Scriptures oft declare.

Then these great things should everie fancie wisse,
For this abiding wealth the world should caine:
For it brings life and such perpetuall blisse,
That Abrahams children needs to wish no more.

Which if my soule were once sure to enjoy,
When all this vaile of miserie is past:
No earthlie conflict heere should me annoy,
Because I should possesse the heavens at last.

But all toyle, troubles, contrarie change of time,
My faith should welcome, and not be affraide:
Thogh cares would blast the blossomes of my prime,
That I were fynde or as in morter brayde.

All should I embrace as tokens of thy loue,
And I should feed vpon thy favour still:
My songs of praise should mount to heavens aboue,
While I were fashioned to thine holie will.

Then should I alwaies solemnize thy name,
For this deliverie to thy servant granted:
To sing thy mercie this should be my theme,
As did the godlie who thy Courts haue hanted,

The Complaint of

On Davids Harpe oft should my finger strike,
Yea Davids heart in my breast should be found:
That heavenlie voice which from my lippes shold brek
Most Echo-like among the rocks should sound,

No musick should but Hebrue songs delight me,
Thogh all the Muses with their mirth were broght:
I know the lecherous finger will despight me,
But all his sonnets should I set at nighr.

Good Ezechias to thy house should lead me,
With David to the Temple should I passe:
And holie Moses through the Courts should guide me,
In Sions songs should be our merinesse,

But who can sing in such a monstrous graue?
Or praise thy name in this infernall place:
Who can be glade who doth not grace receaue
To see the sweetnes of thy heavenlie face?

Or can his voice be heard in heavens above,
Whose soule is crushed in the earth below?
Or may my minde be warmed with thy loue,
While ever frowning thou thy selfe doest show?

Oh raise my soule from such a gulfie of care,
As thou didst Lazarus bodie from the graue:
Reviue my spirits, that yet I may repare
These pleasant places which the Saints receaue.

For oh, thou seest my fainting in distresse,
How no mans torment is so much as mine:
And how my paines are so remedileffe,
That thogh I live, yet in that life I pine.

Must

Must this, alas, thy servant needs be gone?
That all supporting ayde is from him raine:
Or shall I die before my dayes be done?
Or shall I liue when all these dayes are gane?

If once thy former mercie was so great,
When as thou sparedst all the world for one:
One may haue access to thy mercies seat,
Throgh all in all who sits vpon the Throne.

For once he suffered for my great trespas,
Once he was offered for the sinnes of men:
In him thy verie justice pleased was,
Offorce thy mercie must remit vs then.

So all my troubles and afflictions strange
Shall not destroy me nor procure my wrack:
Because my God he doth not still revenge,
But tryes his children when he does them strike.

The mother doth absent her selfe a while,
From her deare childe whom she intierly loueth:
And so the infant after this exile,
In his affection much more seruent proueth.

So thogh my God from me his face obscure,
Yet will he kyith when all these clouds are past:
And this desertion shall my soule allure,
To loue more trewlie nor I loued last.

Its not to leaue me that my God is gone,
Its not to kill me that he sends the crooke:
He doth not strike that I should die anone,
But fines the gold by burning of the drosse.

• Since by the fornace our corruption dies,
And all our faultie parts are framde of new:
And all the trouble that the bodie sees,
Serues but to make it of an heavenlie hew.

We should not fret to be afflicted much,
Since by afflictions we the heaven attaine,
And none to Canaan ever can approch,
But he who in the wildernes hes bene.

Then thogh great waters do so oft beset mee,
That Sathan says it's thy extreame disdaine,
Yet now thy wondrous goodnes will not let mee,
Dispare of mercy for a world of paine.

But thogh thou kill me, to thy hand I'le come,
And thogh thou slay me, I shall ever loue thee,
No chance. no change shall so my speech benume,
But it shall praise thee as my thoughts do proue thee.

Touch, touch my lips, for oh my soule doth long
To be annointed with thy heavenly grace,
And thus I put a period to my song,
Quhill I appeare before thy glorious face.

M. George Muschet Minister of the
Evangel at Dunning.



